



St. Vincent
Healthcare

Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System

House Human Services Committee
Montana House of Representatives
Helena, MT

February 5, 2007

Honorable Members of the House Human Services Committee:

This letter is written in response to proposed House Bill 359, "An Act Requiring Clinical Laboratory Testing to be Conducted at an Individual's Request..." This bill raises several concerns related to the goal of this type of testing as well as the overall premise of testing without a provider's order.

St. Vincent Healthcare (SVH) provides a consumer-driven laboratory access product called "LabCheck". We have made this limited service (current menu, attachment A) available to the general public since July of 2003. The program was initiated with the goal of assisting the consumer in the management and maintenance of health. The basic assumption is that the person seeking the service is currently well. This is not a service geared toward someone who is ill. People who are ill should seek the assistance of a physician or other licensed healthcare provider to determine the cause of the problem and to create a management and treatment plan for that illness, once diagnosed.

As providers of this consumer-driven service we stress that results are for informational purposes only and do not substitute for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. The responsibility and accountability for follow-up, if required, shifts from the Healthcare Facility and its providers to the patient/consumer. There is no interpretation of results for the patient and there cannot be as results that are interpreted in the absence of an examination that includes a history and physical taking into account current signs and symptoms would be irresponsible. There is no licensed provider available or able to interpret results for these patients. Providers in the laboratory industry understand that test results within the normal range do not ensure health and that results outside the normal range may not indicate disease. Laboratory tests are not a substitute for a medical evaluation.

Our experience with the LabCheck product has taught us to continue to be conservative in our test offerings to the public. During the past three years we have been asked to assist in "outsmarting" the drug screening practices of employers. We have been asked to provide testing with the potential consequence of excluding a man as the biological father of a child. (This individual thought his wife was cheating on him and wanted to prove it through uneducated interpretation of laboratory test results.) Parents who want a drug screen performed on a less-than-cooperative child have approached us. And, there is always the question of testing for sexually transmitted diseases in an attempt to avoid our public health management protocols that include contact notification. Additionally, we receive requests from patients who would like to manage medication. An example would be the patient taking oral anticoagulants who would bypass provider charges by practicing self-management (using a Prothrombin

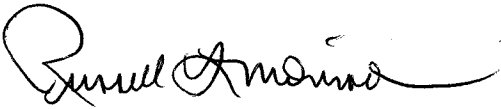
Time test) and endangering his/her life in the process. As you can see from our menu of tests, the Prothrombin Time is not offered to the public through the LabCheck program.

It has also been our experience that patients do not understand our inability to bill insurance when testing is offered without a provider order that includes a diagnostic code. Contrary to the language in the bill that states this type of testing "may" be exempt from coverage, I personally do not know of any insurance provider that will allow SVH to bill for laboratory services that are not requested by a licensed health care provider.

In summary, while the legislation proposed is well intended, it creates an unmanageable service requirement for the laboratories that exist within the state of Montana. It is our opinion that it puts the health of the public at risk. It could assist in circumventing legitimate drug screening protocols that protect both employers and the public. It also creates public health situations that may lead to undesirable outcomes. For all of these reasons, we ask that this bill be withdrawn.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our position.

Sincerely,



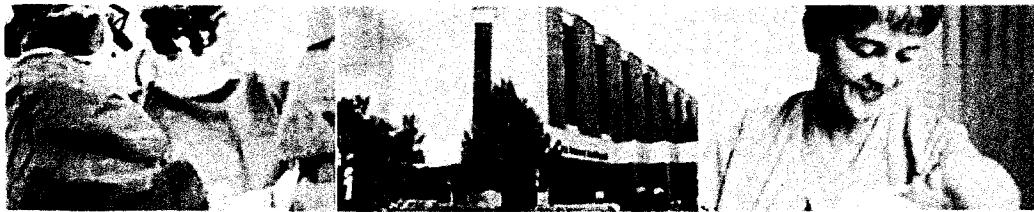
Russell L. Morrison, MBA, MT(ASCP)SBB
Director, Laboratory Services
St. Vincent Healthcare
1233 N. 30th Street
Billings, MT 59101
(406) 237-8081
Russell.Morrison@svh-mt.org

Attachment



St. Vincent Healthcare

Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System


[OUR SERVICES](#)
[HEALTH & WELLNESS](#)
[PATIENTS & FAMILIES](#)
[FIND A PHYSICIAN](#)
[CAREERS](#)
[VOLUNTEER](#)
[MAKE A GIFT](#)
[ABOUT US](#)

1233 North 30th Street
Billings, MT 59101
406.657.7000

[Home](#) | [Our Health Services](#) | [All Health Services](#) | [LabCheck](#)

Search

[Print Page](#) | [Email Page](#)



LabCheck

Prevention and Early Detection are the Best Medicine

We know that many people put off going to the doctor until they are sick. At St. Vincent Healthcare, we have another option — **LabCheck**. This new service offers you the opportunity to check on the status of your health anytime, even when you're feeling fine. **LabCheck** screenings help you manage your healthcare and provide an important tool for illness prevention and early detection. For additional information visit [Your Health and Wellness](#).

We Offer Peace of Mind

There are many reasons to check on the status of your health, even when you are feeling well.

- Normal test results are important because they help establish your baseline for future comparison and give you an overview about your current health.
- Family History — Screenings can help monitor risks based on your family history.
- Illness Prevention — Screenings may expose important information about risk factors that could affect your health. This information can help you and your doctor develop lifestyle changes.
- Early detection — Health screenings can help you identify changes in your health even before symptoms occur. Early detection leads to early intervention and better chances at recovery.

You can order health-screening tests without a doctor's appointment. Follow-up is confidential and provided by registered nurses that can answer questions and, if needed, provide referrals to



In This Section

- » **Blood Count (CBC)** — \$20
- » **Blood Type** — \$25
- » **Cardiac Lipid/Cholesterol Panel** — \$35
- » **Cardiac Risk - Comprehensive Panel** — \$150
- » **Chemistry Survey** — \$65
- » **Diabetes Management Panel** — \$40
- » **Diabetes Screen** — \$20
- » **Health Panel for Men** — \$125
- » **Health Panel for Senior Men** — \$130
- » **Health Panel for Senior Women** — \$130
- » **Health Panel for Women** — \$125
- » **Hemoglobin A1c** — \$125
- » **Hepatitis A** — \$40
- » **Hepatitis B** — \$85
- » **Hepatitis C** — \$50

healthcare providers. When you see a doctor with test results in hand, you can make the most of that valuable time for a more in-depth discussion of your health concerns.

LabCheck offers high quality and affordable health screening at one convenient location in the St. Vincent Healthcare Lab. Free valet parking is available. Call or [click here](#) for an appointment today.

LabCheck offers these screenings with your health in mind...

Disclaimer and Consent

Blood Count (CBC) — \$20
Blood Type — \$25
Cardiac Lipid / Cholesterol Panel — \$35
Cardiac Risk — Comprehensive Panel — \$150
Chemistry Survey — \$65
Diabetes Management Panel — \$40
Diabetes Screen — \$20
Health Panel for Men — \$125
Health Panel for Seniors (Men) — \$130
Health Panel for Seniors (Women) — \$130
Health Panel for Women — \$125
Hemoglobin A1c — \$25
Hepatitis A — \$40
Hepatitis B — \$85
Hepatitis C — \$50
Hepatitis Profile (A, B and C) — \$150
Mononucleosis — \$20
Occult Blood (stool) — \$25
Pregnancy Test (blood) — \$30
Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) — \$45
Testosterone — \$45
Thyroid Panel — \$35
Urinalysis — \$20

» **Hepatitis Profile Profile (A, B and C) — \$150**
» **Mononucleosis — \$20**
» **Occult Blood (stool) — Take-Home Test Kit — \$25**
» **Pregnancy Test (serum) — \$30**
» **Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) — \$45**
» **Testosterone — \$45**
» **Thyroid Panel — \$35**
» **Urinalysis — \$20**